

A photograph showing the silhouettes of several people standing in a room with large windows. The sun is shining through the windows, creating a bright glow and long shadows. The people appear to be in a meeting or collaborative work environment.

# Unemployment Insurance ADVISORY COMMITTEE



**Employment Security Department**  
WASHINGTON STATE

# Agenda



- I. Approval of Dec. 10, 2025, meeting minutes
- II. Legislative Updates
- III. Rulemaking
- IV. Governor's Budget update
- V. Call Center Pilot update
- VI. Public comment
- VII. Adjourn

# Legislative Updates



**Employment  
Security  
Department**  
WASHINGTON STATE

Josh Dye, Government Relations Director, ESD

# Legislative Updates



## HB 2345/SB 6199: ARL regarding Paid Leave contributions

- Adjusting the contributions of employers and employees for the family medical rates

## HB 2485: Supplemental benefits + program evaluation

- Limits concurrent use of PTO or payments when taking Paid Leave
- ESD evaluates processes and policy around qualifying events

## SB 5889 : Supplemental benefits for gov. employees

- Limiting supplemental benefits for public employee while on Paid Leave

# Legislative Updates



## SB 6106: ARL Modifying the Washington WARN Act

- Removes Tribes from the WA WARN Act's definition on employer
- Excludes the names and addresses of employees from the Public Records Act

## HB 2563: Concerning UI notices

- Allows OAH to provide certain appeal notices electronically

## SB 5887 : UI employer reporting

- Allows ESD to waive certain incomplete wage report penalties

## SB 6134: Overpayment notifications for striking workers

- Directs Employment Security to notify claimants involved in a strike of the potential for overpayments when receiving backpay

# Rulemaking



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Stephanie Frazee, Legislation and Rules Coordinator, ESD

# Rulemaking



- **CRO Filings** – We amended our rules to make filing requirements with the Commissioner's Review Office more consistent. The rules were adopted on October 29 and became effective on November 29.
- **Transportation Network Companies** – We amended our rules on quitting for reduction of hours or compensation of 25% or more for TNC drivers and added a rule on relief of benefit charges for employers who offer part-time work. The rules were adopted on January 15 and will become effective on February 15.

# Rulemaking



## ESSB 5525 – Securing Timely Notification and Benefits for Laid-off Employees Act

- **Rule Governance Statement** – We updated WAC 192-01-001 to include administration of the mass layoffs program under Title 49 RCW. The rule was adopted on December 11 and became effective on January 11.
- **Use of Employee Information** – We have proposed rule language clarifying that employee information obtained by the Department will be used to administer the Employment Security Act. The hearing will be on January 30 at 9:00 AM via Zoom.
- **Documentation for Exceptions** – We are drafting rule language in accordance with Section 7 of the bill, which requires the Department to adopt rules that include documentation requirements for exceptions to the notice requirement.
- **Definitions** – We are looking at terms in the bill that may benefit from further definition, such as “unforeseeable.”



# Rulemaking



## Coming Soon – rulemaking on work registration

- Federal law requires that unemployment claimants are registered for work in the state's labor exchange system. ESD currently register claimants directly into the WorkSource case management platform, ETO. With the implementation of the new WIT system, we are addressing this discrepancy.
- Before WIT is launched in May, we must update WAC 192-180-005 to correctly place responsibility on claimants to register. We also are updating internal policies, procedures, and communications to claimants to ensure folks are properly directed to register for work. This work is scoped to solely ensure that WAC and technology are aligned.

# Governor's Budget update



**Employment  
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Martin McMurry, Chief Operating Officer, ESD

# Governor Ferguson's 2026 Supplemental Budget



## **Federal funding shortfall –**

- Federal funding to support the Unemployment Insurance programs has been reduced. ESD request authority to use the remaining \$19 million in Reed Act funds to support the Unemployment Insurance Administrative grant shortfall.
- Governor's budget fully funds this request.

## **UI Strikes and Lockouts (ESSB 5041):**

- A technical correction is requested to reflect the full costs of ESSB 5041 that was funded at an earlier version of the bill.
- Governor's budget fully funds this request.

# Governor Ferguson's 2026 Supplemental Budget



- **Fund transfers to DSHS:** Administrative Contingency (Penalties & Interest – P&I) funding increases from \$4 million to \$18 million, with an additional \$2 million in the Employer Services account (Claimant Placement Program – CPP).
- **OAH billing rate increase:** The increase is incorporated into the federal shortfall funding.
- **EcSA:** Includes a \$2 million fund swap from CPP to the WIOA Governor's Reserve for 25–27. The EcSA program also receives an additional \$1 million in FY27 only.

# Call Center Pilot update



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Tatjana Roberts, Claims Center Enterprise Manager, ESD

# UI Call Center Pilot



## What changed?

Effective Oct 27, 2025, the UI claims center reduced phone hours on Tuesdays and Thursdays to 8am – 12 pm.

## Pilot Goals:

- Through modified staffing:
  - Increase overall weekly call capacity by 8%
  - Increase FTE hours dedicated to intake non-phone work (NPW) to help reduce backlog in these tasks
- Increase first-pay timeliness
- Increase efficiency by reducing switching costs
- Increase employee morale and reduce burn-out

# UI Call Center Pilot



	Pre-Pilot	Current Performance (non-holiday weeks)
Average weekly call capacity	5,000	5,800 (16%↑)
Average FTE dedicated daily to phone staffing	34.59	37.9 (↑ 3.5 FTE)
Average calls per FTE per month	144.6	153.9 (6%↑)
Weekly Intake NPW capacity	11,150	15,270 (37%↑)
YOY Q4 First Pay Timeliness	67.4% (Q4 2024)	70.4% (Q4 2025)

*Based on the results of the pilot, UI workload and no funding for overtime we will continue the pilot through the end of the fiscal year.*

# Public Comment



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# Public Comment



- If you would like to make public comment, please state your name and spell it so we can capture it correctly for the minutes, as well as the organization you represent if any.
- **Reminder:** Your comments are being recorded.
- If you would like your comments to be included in the meeting minutes, please submit them in writing via email to Camille Galeno at [camille.galeno@esd.wa.gov](mailto:camille.galeno@esd.wa.gov). *(Camille's email will be posted in the chat)*
- Please limit your comments to **two minutes**.

# Thank you

## Unemployment Insurance ADVISORY COMMITTEE



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Next UIAC meeting:  
Friday, Feb. 20 at 3:30 pm